

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 AID-20

ACDA-19 DRC-01 IO-14 NIC-01 (ISO) W

----- 121744

R 291140Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5120

INFO DIA DOD WASHDC

USCINCSO

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USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJECT: MORE POLITIC*L FALLOUT FROM AZUL ATTACK

REF: BA 0648, 0615

1. SUMMARY: CONTRARY TO INITIAL PRESS REPORTS, THE VOTING ON THE PENAL CODE REFORM (BA-0648) SHOWED A FEW MORE FISSURES IN THE FREJULI BLOC THAN INITIALLY INDICATED. HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR THE VOTES OF 6 NON-BLOC DEPUTIES THE MEASURE WOULD HAVE FALLEN ONE SHORT OF THE 123 VOTES NECESSARY FOR PASSAGE. CALABRO WAS SWORN IN TO REPLACE BIDEAIN AS GOVERNOR OF BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE. OVER 20 INCIDENTS WERE RECORDED IN A WAVE OF BOMB ATTACKS OVER THE WEEKEND MAINLY AGAINST LEFTIST PERONISTS.

*2. CONTRARY TO INITIAL PRESS REPORTS THAT THE VOTING ON THE PENAL CODE REFORM HAD BEEN ALONG PARTY LINES WITH BUT 3 EXCEPTIONS, THE PATTERN SHOWED A FEW MORE FISSURES IN THE FREJ*LI BLOC THAN INITIALLY INDICATED. THE MEASURE NEEDED 123 VOTES TO PASS AND RECEIVED 5 MORE THAN THE NUMBER NECESSARY. ONLY 122 OF 143 FREJULI DEPUTIES VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE BILL HOWEVER. THUS IF IT

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WERE NOT FOR THE 6 NONBLOC DEPUTIES WHO WENT ALONG WITH THE

MAJORITY THE BILL WOULD HAVE FAILED.

3. THE 21 FREJULI DEPUTIES WHO DIDN'T VOTE FOR THE MEASURE
BREAK DOWN AS FOLLOWS:

EIGHT WERE THE YOUTH DEPUTIES WHO RESIGNED FROM CONGRESS
AFTER PERON TOLD THEM TO VOTE FOR THE MEASURE OR LEAVE THE PARTY
(SEE BA 0615). LASTIRI COULDN'T VOTE BECAUSE HE WAS PRESIDING
OVER THE SESSION. FOUR WERE PERONISTS WITH VALID EXCUSES FOR
BEING ABSENT. THE REMAINING 8 WERE MEMBERS OF MOVIMIENTO DE
INTEGRACION E DESAROLLO (MID) FACTION OF FREJULI WHO ABSENTED
THEMSELVES RATHER THAN VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE BILL.

4. THE 8 REPRESENT ONE FACTION OF THE CURRENTLY SPLIT 15 MAN
MID GROUP, AND INCLUDE MARCOS MERCHENSKY, A SECOND VICE PRESI-
DENT OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES. PRESSURE IS BEING APPLIED TO
FORMER PRESIDENT FRONDIZI, HEAD OF THE MID GROUP, TO SANCTION
THE 8 ESPECIALLY THE 2 HOLDING LEADERSHIP POSITIONS.

5. VICTOR CALABRO WAS SWORN IN ON JAN 26 AS GOVERNOR OF
BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE REPLACING FORMER GOVERNOR BIDEGAIN WHO
WAS FORCED TO RESIGN IN THE AZUL RAID AFTERMATH. HALF OF THE
6 MAN BIDEGAIN CABINET WAS REPLACED.

6. THE WEEKEND SAW MORE THAN A SCORE OF BOMB ATTACKS DIRECTED
MOSTLY AGAINST LEFTIST PERONIST OFFICES BUT INCLUDING OTHER
LEFTIST TARGETS AS WELL. FEW INJURIES WERE REPORTED. ONE LEFTIST
PERONIST LABOR LEADER WAS ALSO REPORTED KIDNAPPED.

7. COMMENT. THE PENAL CODE REFORM VOTE CAME DANGEROUSLY
CLOSE TO BEING THE FREJULI'S FIRST DEFEAT. THE VOTES NECES-
SARY TO PASS CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES OF THIS TYPE SHOULD BE
ENSURED ONCE THE SUCCESSORS OF THE 8 YOUTH DEPUTIES ARE SWORN
IN. THEY WILL BE REPLACED BY 6 ORTHODOX AND 2 LEFTIST PERONISTS.
THE WAVE OF BOMBINGS IS ALMOST CERTAINLY THE ACT OF RIGHT WING
PERONISTS TAKING A CUE FROM PERON'S AZUL SPEECH. THIS PROCESS
NOW STARTED WILL NOT BE EASILY CONTROLLED AND MAY SET OFF A
REACTION ON THE PART OF THE PERONIST LEFT. THE LEFTIST PERONIST
YOUTH HAVE ALREADY DECLARED THEMSELVES TO BE IN A STATE OF
ALERT.

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